

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting
Thursday, December 12, 2014
9:30 a.m.
Mayor's Conference Room, Government Center

Council Members Present:

Lucia Cook	Program Manager for Literacy Volunteers at Family Centers
Deidre Costello Anspach	Director of Nursing and Dental Services, City of Stamford
Karen Feder	Director of Youth Services/ Birth to Three Representative - Abilis
Sheila Glenn	ROSCCO Agency – After School Network
Cindy Grafstein	Special Assistant to the Mayor – Mayor's Designee
Emmanuella Lauture	Home Day Care Provider
Polly Morrow	Program Manager, Corporate Citizenship and Philanthropy
Erica Phillips	Director, All Our Kin
Dr. Polly Rauh	Board of Education
Ellen Reardon	Director, Stamford Museum and Nature Center Preschool
Michele Sabia	Former SPS Curriculum Associate for Early Childhood Education
Karen Wenz	Director, First Presbyterian Nursery School

Grant Recipients/Advisors/Guests:

Donna Arcuri	School Readiness Liaison
Karen Brennan	Director, Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative
Karen Cammarota	Grants Officer
Imelda D'Luc	Director, Head Start – CLC
Jennifer DeRubies	Curriculum Associate, Early Childhood Education – SPS
Marc Jaffe	Executive Director, CLC
Cheryl Poltrack	Director of Grants and Funded Programs, SPS
Margo Sandahl	Instructional Coordinator
Carol Sargent	Director, State Funded Programs – CLC
Nathalie Tocci	Care to Care Coordinator, Family Centers

I. Welcome & Introductions

Polly Morrow welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. She then invited the group to introduce themselves.

II. Approval of Minutes from November 2014 Meeting

The Council unanimously approved the minutes from the November meeting.

III. School Readiness Provider Reports

Provider reports were sent in advance of the meeting and are included here as Attachments A, B, and C. There were no comments or questions on the reports during the meeting.

IV. School Readiness Liaison Update, Donna Arcuri

Donna Arcuri shared that the State will soon be offering training on the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) for home day care/family day care providers. Donna has met with Erica Phillips from All Our Kin to discuss how this might be implemented and where funding might come from.

The group discussed the need for additional professional development for all providers and agreed to form a small planning group to investigate. The planning group would be charged with creating a program of professional development offerings and a budget for these. It's possible that Pitney Bowes, the Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative, and the Stamford Director's Group, all might be able to contribute to this.

It was also suggested that we reach out to Joan Parris, as her group will conduct workshops for \$150.

Donna also mentioned how many communities have unused slots which are not being used. If Stamford can identify and find providers willing to apply for School Readiness funding, these will be up for grabs.

V. Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative Update, Karen Brennan

Karen Brennan shared that the Collaborative will be hosting a Lunch and Learn at the Harry Bennett branch of the Ferguson Library on Monday, December 15. A good turnout is expected – including community members who have been active in our work, and those who know little about the Collaborative but are hoping to learn more.

VI. Announcements

Ellen Reardon from the Stamford Museum and Nature Center shared the Museum's winter brochure and reminded everyone that entrance into the Museum is free when you ride the City bus.

Carol Sargent encouraged the group to come to the CLC's Book Fair this week and let us know the Lunch and Learn CLC held on positive parenting was a great success and she would be like to share info if anyone interested.

Marc Jaffe commented at how well done the White House Early Learning Summit went on December 10. He will forward to Council a link with recaps and video footage. It was a "8-10 hour commercial for what we do!"

The group briefly discussed the \$12 million award to select communities in Connecticut and questioned why Stamford was not included. Donna will follow up with language from the grant application on why Stamford was not a candidate.

VII. Smart Start Grant, Overview and Request for Letter of Support

Cheryl Poltrack the Director of Grants and Funded Programs for Stamford Public Schools attended the meeting and shared with the Council SPS' plan to apply for a Smart Start grant and request a letter of support from the Council.

The Smart Start grant is a competitive grant program administered by the Office of Early Childhood that creates a financial partnership with towns that choose to offer pre-K as an option for families. It builds additional capacity for pre-K in traditional public school settings with certified public school teachers. Only public school districts may apply.

Smart Start provides capital grants up to \$75,000 per classroom. Towns can use these funds to renovate or reconfigure existing space into preschool classrooms. The program also provides operating funds in the amount of \$5,000 per student up to \$75,000 per classroom (with a maximum of \$300,000 per district) for the expansion or creation of new preschool programs. Some costs associated with running this classroom are: classroom construction for pre-K code regulation compliance, furniture and supplies will come out of the \$75,000 capital grant given. Costs also include, professional development, teacher salary approximately \$70,000, Para salary is expected to be funded by different grant. Regarding summer care, children will be offered the SPS 6 week Summer Start program and SPS will reach out to community organizations for other alternatives. The criteria for student enrollment will be the same as for the Alliance classrooms with the exception of the districting criteria and the Smart Start grant will include 3 year olds. 60% of the children will have no pre-K experience and who are educationally disadvantaged (e.g., residing in income restricted housing, qualify for free or reduced lunch, speak a language other than English in their home, and are from low income neighborhoods). Families will not be charged a fee. SPS will be applying for one classroom of 15-18 students, with the location still to be determined. The classroom will be for 3- to 4-year olds, they will apply for both a \$75,000 capital grant and a \$75,000 operating grant. This is a five year grant, with the option of being able to apply for additional classrooms and funding in years 2-5 (up to \$300,000).

Dr. Polly Rauh replied to questions concerning the Board of Education's plan in regard to current overcrowding in our schools and long term goals for pre-K. Dr. Rauh explained that in regard to overcrowding there will need to be some shifting in the schools. She stated that she believes the long term goal is that she hopes pre-K will be part of Stamford's continuum of education.

The grant is due December 19th and SPS is asking the Council for a letter of support. The council voted in favor of sending the letter following circulation of a draft and incorporation of edits from council members.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

**The next Council meeting will be held on Thursday, January 8 at 11:00 a.m.
at CLC William Pitt Child Development Center.**

Addendum A: APPLES Monthly Report, November 2014

**Stamford Public Schools
School Readiness Classroom Report**

November 2014

- **Program Utilization**
 - a. Authorized Capacity: 15 School Day, School Year slots
 - b. Ages: 4 year olds
 - c. Students with disabilities: 1 child with special needs
- **Program Attendance:**
 - a. Illness: Attendance was consistent this month.
 - b. Notes and trends:
- **Staffing:**
 - a. Staffing is in place.
- **Training:**
 - a. Full Day Professional Development A to Z Learning and PBIS (Positive Behavior Support Intervention Training)
 - b. NAEYC training on standards
- **Special Events/Activities:**
 - a. Mother Goose performed
 - b. Ferguson Library Bookmobile visited
 - c. Students continue to participate in weekly enrichment activities including programs from Bartlett Arboretum, Bricks and Motors, Yoga and Animal Embassy,
 - d. Students participated in classroom Parent Experiences:
 - i. Thanksgiving Family Feast-100% attendance
 - ii. Donation given to Lower Fairfield County food Bank
 - e. Virtual Field Trip: to The First Thanksgiving

Addendum B: Childcare Learning Centers Monthly Report, November 2014

School Readiness Report Childcare Learning Centers, Inc.

November, 2014

- **Program Utilization**
 - a. Authorized Capacity – 374 – Full Day; 97 – Part Day; 60- Extended Day= 531
 - b. Attended – 524
 - c. Ages – 253- 3 year olds, 271 - 4 year olds, 0 - 5 year olds
 - d. Children with disabilities - 15 with LEA- IEP; 2 without LEA-IEP
 - e. Notes and Trends: Down 3 Part Day slots and 4 Full Day at Lathon Wider.
We are noticing a decline of families interested in Part Day.
- **Program Attendance:**
 - a. 99%of enrollment
 - b. Notes and trends:
- **Staffing**
 - Open Positions-
 - a. Cluster A – Assistant Teacher
 - b. Cluster A - 2 Teachers
 - c. Lathon Wider- Head Teacher
 - c. Recruitment – ads on-line, local newspapers, postings at NCC.
- **Training:**
 - a. Observations/ Assessments – November 6th and 20th
 - b. Yale/Ruler – November 18th
- **Special Events/Activities:**
 - Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the Preschool Curriculum Standards and the individual needs of the children.
 - Hearing Screening – throughout the month
 - Parent/Teacher conferences – throughout the month and into December
 - Cluster B – Stamford High School November 3rd and 25th
 - Early Childhood Fair - November 1st.
 - St Luke's Volunteers – November 5th
 - Cluster B – “Come Visit with Me” November 6th
 - Lunch and Learn – “Positive Parenting” – November 7th.
 - Cluster D – “ Come Visit with Me – Me and My Name” – November 14th
 - Lathon Wider – Monitoring Visit, Julie Coakley – November 14th
 - Lunch and Learn – “Intro to ELDS's – November 19th and 20th.
 - Bookmobile – November 5th and 19th
 - Donna Arcuri, School Readiness Liaison – monitoring visit November 5th

- Music and Movement with Fiona Angelov – every Tuesday and Thursday
- Bruce Museum field trips throughout the month
- Parent Advisory Council – meeting November 19th

Addendum C: St. Clements Monthly Report, November 2014

St. Clement Preschool

November – 2014

Program Utilization:

- School Day – School Year – 42 Students to date
- Pre – K 3 Class – 17
- Pre – K 4 Class #1-13
- Pre – K 4 Class #2-12
- All 31 School Readiness slots are taken.
- Continuing tours each day. Currently looking for Pre-K 4 students and possibly 1 Pre-K 3 student.

Attendance:

- a. 90% attendance. A few children have coughs, runny noses and colds.

Staffing:

- We are fully staffed! 3 Head Teacher's, 3 Teacher Assistant's
- 95% attendance – A few teachers have used their Personal days.

Activities & Events:

- b. SCP participated in the 7th Annual ECE Fair at Chelsea Piers on Sat., 11/1. We had minimal traffic with just a few parents signing up for tours. Our highlight was when Gov. Malloy stopped by our table to say hello.
- c. 11/4 – SCP Staff attended an all-day Professional Dev. for the CTEDS at the Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport. This PD included all the Preschool Teachers from the diocese.
- d. Both Pre-K 4 classes attending a story time at the Ferguson Library via the "Purple Bus". Teachers may call ahead to choose a theme or topic for the librarian to read.
- e. 11/6 – SCP students were again invited to attend the annual UCONN Literacy Program for young children. The guest reader was the President of UCONN, Susan Herbst and also Crystal Truglia, former representative from Stamford. We thank Pamela Williams – UCONN Co-op for organizing this wonderful event each year.
- f. SCP hosted two days of Parent –Teacher Conferences on 11/12 & 11/13. Each class had approx. 80% of our families attend and the staff have made plans to meet with others to discuss their child's strengths and to make goals for the coming months.
- g. Lifetouch Studios took individual & class photos of each child and classroom. Staff even had photos taken!!

- h. SCP hosted children and parents for a spectacular Children's Feast on 11/24. We were all treated to chicken tenders, mac & cheese, carrots, corn muffins and cookies for dessert.

The Ferguson Bookmobile now stops here each Tuesday morning at 9:30am. The bookmobile librarian hosts each classroom reading